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ABSTRACT

This document provides an annual report and financial review of the Bernard van Leer Foundation, a private institution created in 1949 for broad humanitarian purposes. Following an introduction by the chairman of the Foundation's board of trustees, a report of the executive director details the first full-year of implementation of the Foundation's "Strategic Plan" for the period 1996-2001. The remainder of the document provides a financial report for 1997 and lists and describes, by country, major projects supported by the Foundation during 1997. A profile of the Bernard van Leer Foundation concludes the document. (HTH)

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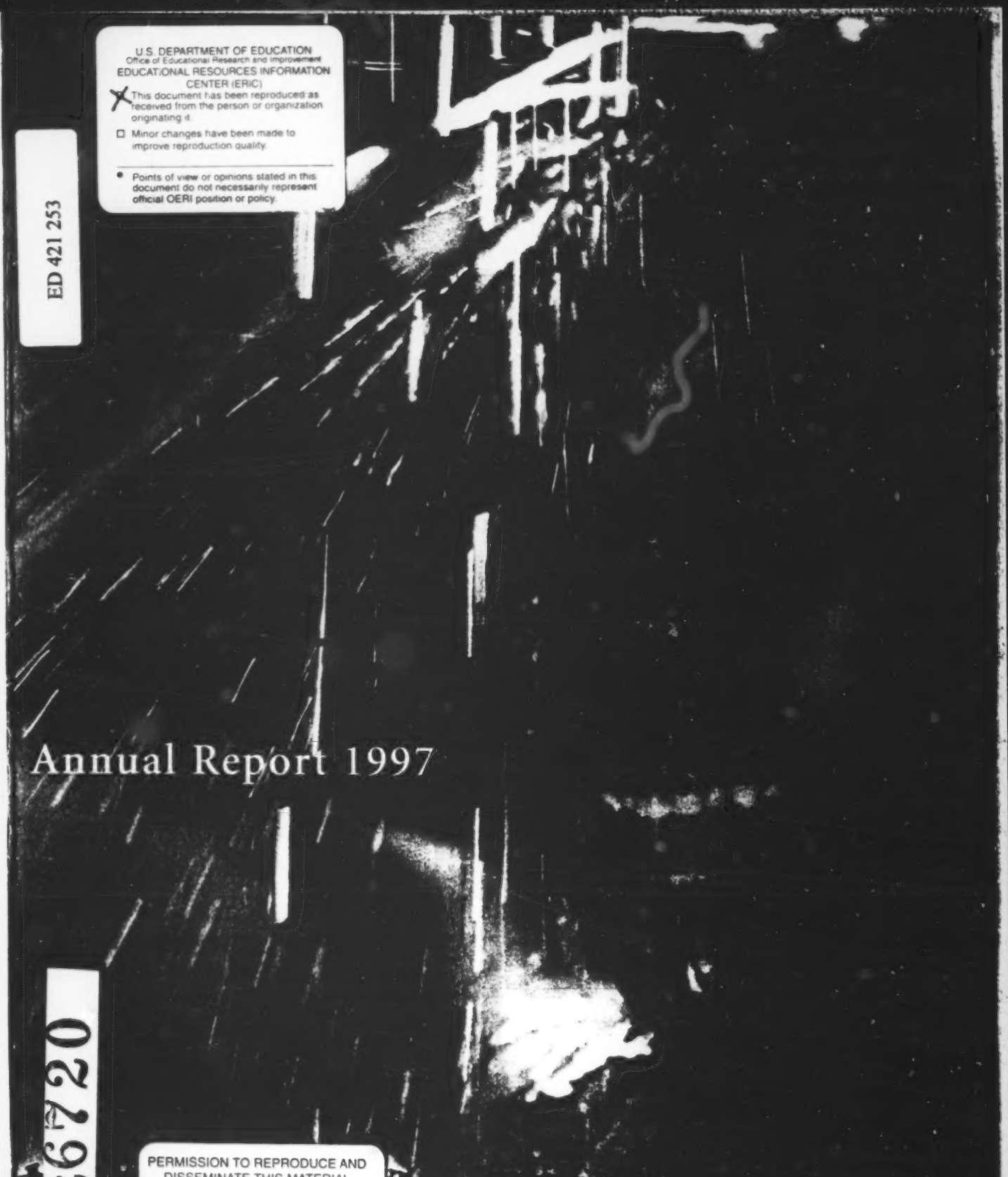

Annual Report 1997

PS 026720

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Bernard van Leer Foundation

Annual Report 1997

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Introduction by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees

The Foundation pursued its two core strategies with professionalism and dedication in 1997. These core strategies are:

- to support the development of innovative field-based approaches in the area of early childhood development (ECD); and
- to draw on relevant experience from both the Foundation's field-based programme and other relevant work in order to inform and influence policy and practice.

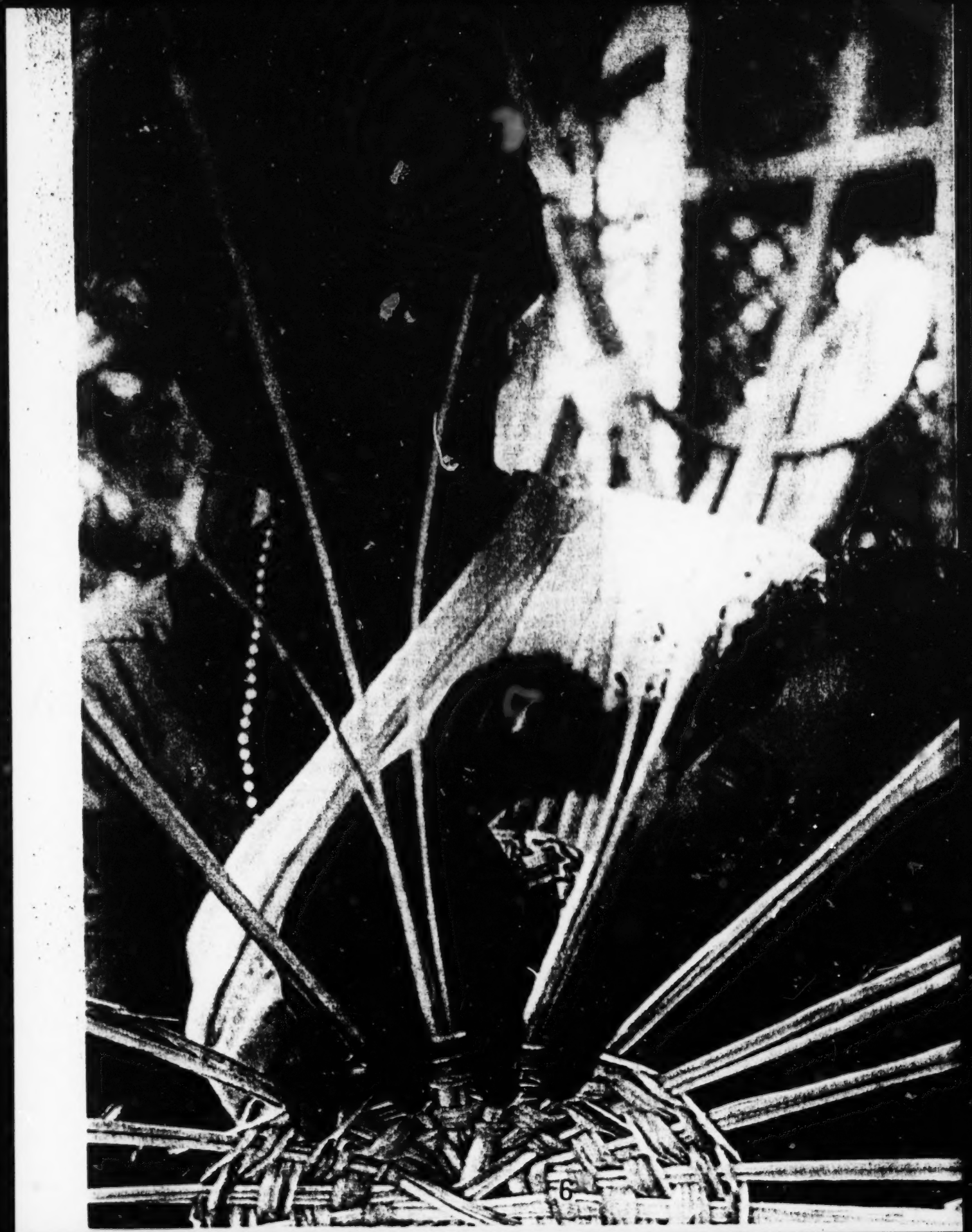
The Foundation also continued the process of opening itself up to the outside world of practitioners and policymakers – including other foundations, multilaterals, and governmental and non-governmental organisations. As a result, a variety of partnerships was developed, not only to exchange information and experiences but also to work towards joint funding of projects and programmes in the field.

In order to be a relevant partner for other organisations and to be on the cutting edge of innovative programme development, an organisation has to take a critical look at its own work. This is exactly what the Foundation has done and will be doing during the years to come. In this respect, we have been addressing the issues of effectiveness and quality. Such work is especially significant in four areas: in our field-based programme of project support; in the ways we are organised; in enhancing our accountability; and in our initiatives to stay in touch with relevant thinking in the field and in the academic world.

After so many years of work in ECD, the Mandate of the Foundation remains extremely important. It is through the next generation that a society transmits its values, its cultures and its traditions, and thereby ensures its continued existence. The values, attitudes and characteristics that children acquire during their first years will last throughout life. If we invest in the healthy development of young children then we are investing in their future, in the future of their families and in the future of society at large.

I hope that you will enjoy reading the 1997 Annual Report of the Bernard van Leer Foundation.

Ivar Samren



Report of the Executive Director for 1997

This has been the first full year of implementation of our Strategic Plan for the period 1996-2001, with much of our work focused on the objectives that this sets out as we fulfil our Mandate. It has been a time of change and consolidation, and I would like to start by thanking my colleagues in the Foundation for their commitment and enthusiasm. In this report, I will first briefly review the most significant aspects of the Strategic Plan, showing how these have influenced or determined both our work in the field, and our work in the Foundation. Then I will describe and discuss in more detail the most significant activities of the Foundation during the year.

Implementing the Strategic Plan

The Foundation's Strategic Plan for the period 1996-2001 was built on the experience that we have accumulated over many years in the field of early childhood development (ECD) and a response to changes in our operating environment, including changes in the socio-economic, cultural and political environment of the regions in which we operate. It also took account of factors particular to certain countries. These include the retreat of government from some areas of social provision, and a consequent expansion of service delivery by the private sector as the civic society becomes more important.

In 1997, the Strategic Plan had a clear impact on our two main areas of work: supporting projects in the field; and gathering, analysing and disseminating experiences and findings. In terms of supporting projects, this often involved partnerships with other foundations, multilateral organisations and non-governmental and governmental organisations. It also meant tightening our geographic focus while shaping our project support programme to give greater emphasis to specific issues and areas of interest. Especially noteworthy here are anti-bias curriculum development; activities for indigenous groups and immigrants; and the promotion of resilience in children, their families and their communities.

In terms of our work with experiences and findings, the Strategic Plan led us to focus on two areas of special interest – 'effectiveness' and 'culturally appropriate approaches in ECD'. It also led us to refine and strengthen the considerations and processes that lead to publications and other products; and to devise more efficient ways of accessing the information that we have about projects funded in the past.

In addition, the Strategic Plan strongly influenced the general life of the Foundation during 1997. In particular, we continued to expand our programme of developing and sustaining alliances with other major players associated with ECD; and we also streamlined our procedures for bringing in people with knowledge, skills and expertise to complement those that we have in-house. These measures helped us to maximise the effective use of our own resources.

Supporting projects

Programme development

The greater part of the Foundation's expenditure goes on supporting and monitoring our support for projects and initiatives in the field that help to improve prospects for children from 0 to 7 years of age. In 1997, the Foundation supported some 155 major projects

(see pages 25-31). Dolf Schweizer directed this work, in the absence of the Director of Programme Development and Management. As indicated above, supported projects now reflect a number of current themes, concerns and areas of interest, giving a more obvious structure to our field-based project support programme, and enabling us to concentrate on making qualitative improvements in the ways in which we seek and support new projects.

In opting for such a strategy, we have to focus sharply on the countries in which we work and discover the most relevant themes for our project support programme. This is a complex process that is primarily driven by the needs in the field as they are presented to us through project submissions by governmental and non-governmental organisations. Naturally, the process also includes extensive dialogues with those who are directly concerned with the well-being of young children. That means: their families and communities; those who work in early childhood projects; planners and policy makers; and those who, like ourselves, bring regional and international perspectives to bear.

This process is only possible because of our long history of supporting projects that work directly with children, their families and their communities; and because of the extensive networks that we have built up over the years.

Choosing some themes means not choosing others that may seem equally important; but we believe that if we are to use the available money to the best effect then we must concentrate our resources. This is not as rigid as it may seem, for we are also flexible enough to ensure that, as far as possible, our project support programme meets actual needs that are emerging. In short, we don't automatically turn down promising projects that fall outside our current thematic interests.

Better budgeting

The Foundation has to be accountable in all areas of its work, not least in financial terms. It is therefore very pleasing for me to report that we have further developed two operating procedures that help us to keep a still tighter degree of control in two areas that are notoriously difficult: overall budgeting in our project support programme; and the funding of new projects.

In terms of overall budgeting, to a large extent we rely on the people in the Foundation who prospect for new projects, assess proposals and monitor project work – the Programme Specialists. Within established programmatic parameters that are defined in Country Programme Statements, it is their job to prioritise the actual submissions and prospects. Aggregating the sums to be earmarked for each country helps us to set a target budget that we try to meet within the constraints of funds available.

In 1997, we took many steps forward in determining the correct level of funding for proposed new projects. Financial expertise was blended with programmatic knowledge in critically assessing budgets and accounts, in formulating pragmatic tools for monitoring projects, and in training Programme Specialists. The result was a reduction in spending levels per project, and a consequent potential increase in the number of projects that could be funded.

Project approaches and work

It is obviously impossible for me to give more than a flavour of the variety and richness of the work of the major projects that we support. Some operate in developing countries, others in industrialised countries. They may be in urban slums, shanty towns and remote rural areas; and may focus on children living in violent settings, children of ethnic and cultural minorities, children of single or teenage parents, and children of refugees and migrants. They may work to improve quality in daycare centres, pre-schools, health and other services; to develop community-based services; or to improve the quality of home environments by working with parents and other family members and caregivers.

However, I would like to mention four groups of projects that are of special interest. The first is in Kenya where we have agreed to participate in an initiative that will greatly expand ECD provision throughout the country. It is funded by the World Bank, with additional support from the Aga Khan Foundation and ourselves; and is a four-way partnership with the Government of Kenya. One of the major elements in this initiative involves building ECD capacity through community support grants. This will complement a wide dissemination of innovative ECD approaches developed over many years by the NACECE/DICECE programmes of the Kenya Institute of Education – a long term Foundation partner. Also included are monitoring and evaluation of both the effectiveness of the approaches, and of the partnership itself.

Meanwhile, in South America, a large amount of support was devoted to exploring and developing ways of promoting resilience in young children, their families and their communities. In a sense, we have established an experimental laboratory. This will look in great detail at how the concept of resilience is best understood; will determine how to promote resilience in practical terms; and will show us if promoting resilience is a viable strategy in helping young children to thrive. A major evaluation is built into this work.

Another group of projects is built around anti-bias work – an important element in our project support programme in many countries. In the United States of America we have taken a particular interest in the ways in which very young children are exposed to stereotypes and prejudices in their development environments. These adversely affect their perceptions of others and – even more significantly – affect

their self-image and sense of self-worth. What is clear is that these influences have an impact at a very early age. That means that work to counter or remove them also has to start early. In this sense, our support for the Washington Beech project in Boston, USA, is now yielding very positive results. To build on these, and other similar projects throughout the country, an initiative is in hand to put in place a national infrastructure to sustain ECD anti-bias work in the long term. I expect to see a joint venture involving the Foundation, public bodies and other institutions that will concentrate on training in anti-bias approaches, and on popularising and disseminating anti-bias concepts and new methodologies for work with parents.

Finally, another group of projects is developing in Poland where we have been supporting a new project with the Polish Children and Youth Foundation. This builds on a pilot project that trained trainers of pre-school teachers who were drawn from both the NGO and the public sector. The new project is centred on the development of an age-specific curriculum that will be offered nationally; and a concurrent expansion of the training of trainers in new areas of Poland. Ten thousand young children are expected to benefit. We also supported 'CHANCES for Children', a project that is operated by Association CHANCE in the Ochoto area of Warsaw. Large numbers of young children in Ochoto have to be institutionalised because of problems within their families – particularly alcohol-related problems. The project aims to keep families together and help them function well. It works towards this in two main ways: first by developing advice and counselling services for families – including those headed by single mothers; and second, by supporting pre-school and primary school teachers and other professionals in work associated with these problems.

Project support through Royal Packaging Industries van Leer

In the spirit of the Founder of the Foundation and of Royal Packaging Industries van Leer, local companies can now put forward proposals for projects up to NLG 10,000 each year, in the communities in which they operate. Such projects must be within our Mandate, and must serve specific needs. In this way, Royal Packaging Industries van Leer can demonstrate its conviction that the company's stakeholders are not just the clients but also the communities in which it operates. Such support is also a local manifestation of what the Foundation is committed to globally: returning some of the profits to the communities that produce them.

Gathering, analysing and sharing

This side of the Foundation's work is based on our ability to access information/knowledge from the field. We analyse and structure it, and add value by making comparisons and taking a broad view. Work is determined by a five-pronged strategy covering: Products; 'Effectiveness' and subsidiary themes; the Data Management System; the Resource Centre; and Targeting and Marketing. These come together as an integrated and interdependent approach.

Products
As in all other areas of operational responsibilities, the production of new publications in 1997 was shaped by the reappraisal and repositioning set out in our

Strategic Plan. During the year, approximately 26,000 copies of new publications were sent out to readers in more than 160 countries. These included: *Samenspel – Mothers Speaking*, number 21 in the 'Working Papers in ECD' series; *Boletin Informativo 11*; the Foundation's *Annual Report 1996*; a new poster; and three editions of the Foundation's *Newsletter*. In addition, a further 4,800 copies of older publications were distributed.

One major piece of work was the development of a replacement for the Foundation's *Newsletter*. The result is called *Early Childhood Matters*, and the first edition was in the final stages of production at the end of the year. We believe that *Early Childhood Matters* will prove more contemporary, more relevant, and more attractive to its principal target audiences – practitioners and policy-makers in the field of ECD. Its development relied heavily on the formal and informal responses to the *Newsletter* that we have accumulated over the years and we have already established monitoring mechanisms to help us evaluate the worth of this new publication. The October 1997 *Newsletter* was therefore a last, commemorative edition in which some of our longstanding contributors reviewed their professional achievements by looking back over the 21 years of the *Newsletter's* existence.

'Effectiveness' and subsidiary themes

A focus of much of the work of gathering, analysing and sharing is an exploration of the theme 'Effectiveness in the ECD sector'. In 1997, we began work on this theme by testing a number of possible working approaches. This inevitably led to rescheduling and to us reinforcing our technical ability by bringing in external consultants. It also led us to realise that we should focus on what has been tried, what works, what does not, what can be built on, what may need to be developed, and what should be dropped.

In addition, a large body of work was completed on a sub-theme 'Culturally appropriate approaches in ECD'. More than anything else, the findings reinforced the key significance of context in considering what has been done and why it may or may not have been effective. One consequence of this is a recognition that proper assessment can only be carried out on the ground – something that is of key importance to us as we prepare to tackle the theme of Effectiveness. The work also had the effect of vindicating the 'bottom-up' approach that has long been accepted as the basis for any kind of development work. It also successfully isolated highly effective approaches in ECD that are worthy of further study and possible adaptation for use elsewhere. An outside consultant, who worked closely with a Working Group made up of Foundation staff, carried out this work, focusing on 11 Foundation-supported projects.

Databases

Improved mechanisms were devised to access and work with the vast fund of information that emanates from the experience of projects that the Foundation supports or has supported. The Historic Project Database initiative that ran throughout 1997, is one such mechanism. Its function is to sift through archived material, to identify the elements that can teach us useful lessons, to organise them into a form that allows easy use, and to store them electronically.

To add to the data that we already hold about the achievements and experiences of projects, the Foundation agreed to fund two tracer

studies by former partners – the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation in the United States of America; and the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE). The High/Scope project aimed to counter the effects of social and economic disadvantage by implementing a Parent-to-Parent programme in several communities. Projects that ran under the auspices of KIE go back over 20 years, developing and testing many innovative approaches to ECD. Both studies will trace former participants and try to discover what effects remain for them and their communities more than a decade later.

At a technical level, we have extensively revised the Foundation's Data Management System (DMS). This is central to the successful operation of the Foundation's networking with projects and with other organisations that are important in the world of ECD. DMS will join the Historic Project Database material in a comprehensive relational database that will include the knowledge and experience that the Foundation has accumulated and will continue to accumulate in the field of ECD.

The Resource Centre

To complement the work on databases described above, we have changed the nature of our Documentation Centre. Renamed the Resource Centre in 1997, it now focuses more tightly on materials from the projects that we support, while still maintaining a rich collection of other materials that are of key interest in ECD. It also serves as a search engine for complementary knowledge and information that is held elsewhere. Work also started on identifying the place of the Resource Centre materials within the relational database.

During the year, we were proactive in finding and gathering important new materials. Worthy of mention was a competition to find photographs to expand the Foundation's collection of illustrative material about ECD. This produced over 500 pictures, many of which show significant – often inspirational – moments in the development of young children. Some are included in this publication, many more have already been used to add substance to other Foundation publications, and more will be used in the future.

Targeting and Marketing

While Targeting and Marketing are natural parts of the process of developing new products such as *Early Childhood Matters*, the Strategic Plan requires us to undertake a systematic review of this area. This is now a priority for 1998.

Guest colleagues

The Strategic Plan also encourages the Foundation to bring in people whose knowledge, experience and approaches enable them to make a special contribution to the Foundation's work. Typically with us for a few

months, they undertake specific pieces of work and are seen as guest colleagues rather than consultants. In 1997, Beulah Fredericks joined us to document the work of the Foundation-supported Western Cape Foundation for Community Work in South Africa. This experience was valuable in terms of the work that she accomplished. Future guest colleagues will be undertaking work directly related to our internal needs.

Partnerships and external relationships

The Foundation continued to develop its relationships with national and international organisations during the year. These included multilateral organisations, governmental and non-governmental organisations, and foundations in both the Netherlands and other countries. These comprise, *inter alia*, the World Bank, the European Union, UNICEF, the Aga Khan Foundation, Save the Children, the Directorate-General of International Co-operation of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CARE, the Bertelsmann Foundation, the EDLI Foundation, the Levi Lassen Foundation, the Liberty Foundation, the Schumacher-Kramer Foundation, the Franciscus O Fund managed by the King Baudouin Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Kellogg Foundation, and Levi Strauss Europe. As can be seen in the list of supported projects that starts on page 25, several of these relationships centred on joint support for projects or programmes of work.

The second major focus in these relationships is on gathering the experiences and ideas of other philanthropic organisations, thus influencing the Foundation and its work. During 1997, I served as a Member of the Board of the European Foundation Centre, and of the Board of the Council on Foundations in Washington DC. I also served as Chair of the International Committee of the Council on Foundations. During the year, I was succeeded as Chair of The Hague Club by Paavo Hohti, Executive Director of the Finnish Cultural Foundation. Liesbeth Zwitser continued to serve on the Board of the Vereniging van Fondsen in Nederland (The Association of Foundations in the Netherlands) becoming Vice Chair during the year.

As a result of my membership of the Board of the European Foundation Centre, the Bernard van Leer Foundation was asked to co-ordinate the establishment of a dialogue between European foundations and the World Bank. This resulted in two meetings that explored the nature of relationships between foundations and the World Bank; considered the implications of the Bank's mandatory partnerships with governments; and looked at ways to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in working together.

Staff development

Our normal staff development programmes continued as usual, with a particular focus on the new computer hardware, operating systems and software that we introduced during the year to enhance our productivity. In addition, we inaugurated a programme of staff development via formal placements: three staff members spent time with organisations and institutions that are especially interesting for the Foundation. Huub Schreurs, who has responsibility for our United States of America and Caribbean project support programmes, spent eight weeks at Pacific Oaks College in

California, USA, immersing himself in the complexities of anti-bias issues and work. As well as further developing our understanding of this domain as an organisation, this also allowed us to make contact with people who will be drawn into the anti-bias network that I have already mentioned. Rita Swinnen, who has responsibility for our project support programme in parts of Europe and North Africa, participated in a World Bank training initiative that centred on organisational strategies, procedures and efficiencies, and on the dynamics of innovation and change. Gerry Salole, Director of the Department of Programme Documentation and Communication, spent eight weeks at Duke University in the USA, teaching a course entitled 'Children, ethnicity and violence: an international perspective'. He also took the opportunity for intensive research, and for establishing and cementing significant new relationships in the academic world for the Foundation.

Events

1997 was a full year in terms of the number and variety of early childhood related events organised by the Foundation or by supported projects. All attracted international participation and each had a strong practical flavour. Here I can only offer a small selection.

ATFALE, our primary partner in Morocco, held an international conference that blended theoretical thinking and research, with the sharing and exchanging of experiences and expertise in early childhood education. As well as highlighting the launch of ATFALE in its new incarnation as an NGO, the conference also created and reinforced networking between organisations in the Mediterranean and North Africa region, as well as internationally.

In Italy, under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Family, a series of three seminars was completed in 1997 on the overall theme 'Migrant Families and Local Communities'. These were a joint initiative between the Istituto per la Promozione dello Sviluppo Economico e Sociale (ISPES), the Municipality of Rome, the Comunitá di Sant'Egidio and the Foundation. The themes of individual seminars were: 'Family Support by Migrant Self Help Associations'; 'Statutory Service Providers and Services for Migrant Families and Children'; and 'Interactions and Mutual Support Between Migrant and Local Families'. The seminars provided excellent opportunities for exchanging knowledge and experiences, and positive outcomes are already evident. These include the conceptualisation of programmes and services, and impact on policy formulation.

Also in Italy, Foundation Trustee Wim Brouwer joined the participants in the seminar 'Social Commitment to Children by Local Communities' again organised by ISPES. The seminar reviewed the major lines of development that ISPES and the Foundation have followed together, looking particularly at long-term project impact.

In Portugal, Foundation-supported projects were involved in the two-part international seminar 'To Integrate or to Co-operate' about women's and children's issues in development. The first part was funded by the Portuguese Ministries of International Co-operation and of Education, and by the Municipality of Seixal. It included members of migrant communities in

Portugal as well as representatives from organisations in Portugal, Brazil and Portuguese-speaking Africa that are working on women's and children's issues. The second part centred on the feasibility of an international Portuguese-speaking platform for women's and children's issues, and involved representatives from a range of NGOs that have demonstrated good practice in these fields from a range of Portuguese-speaking countries. Funding came from the Portuguese Government, from the Municipality of Seixal, from the Orient Foundation and from the Bernard van Leer Foundation.

In Belgium, five days of activities related to intercultural and multicultural work promoted the results of two years of international co-operation between seven projects and institutions. These were: the Milestones through Equality towards Quality (MEQ) project based in Belgium, the Association des Collectifs Enfants-Parents Professionels (ACEPP) project from France, the Kent Child Care Network from England, the Dublin Institute for Technology from Ireland, the Training and Resource Centre for Child Care, and the Flemish Centre for the Integration of Migrants from Belgium. Highlights included a tour by a Play Bus that featured intercultural materials including a newly developed CD-ROM. A transnational conference/study day was opened by the Belgian Minister of Family and Welfare, and included five presentations and 10 workshops.

In Galicia, Spain, 300 participants – including many from Foundation-supported projects in Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Colombia and Guatemala – attended the second Congreso de Educación Infantil Familiar that was organised by the Preescolar na Casa project. The three-day programme included more than 40 presentations and workshops, and was especially notable for a presentation by a mother who has been involved with Preescolar na Casa for 14 years. She described the impact of the project on her children, her family and her community, showing how work that focuses on young children can not only profoundly influence their lives but also those of other family and community members. Very much in line with the approach of the project, the Congreso concluded with a festival that included hundreds of children and parents.

In September, the Foundation, together with the Arbeitskreis Neue Erziehung, Germany, hosted a workshop in The Hague for 25 members of projects from Turkey, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium, on providing support to migrant parents. The central feature was an exploration of the effectiveness of intercultural materials, an exercise that will enhance the future development of similar materials.

In December, in Bolivia, we operated a Technical Workshop on Resilience that was co-organised by Servicio Social da Industria, São Pãolo, one of our major project partners in Brazil. This was a sharing and exploring exercise for 24 professionals from the southern part of South America who are engaged, directly or indirectly, in work on resilience with young children. This will strengthen the effectiveness of our extensive project support programme on resilience in the region.

Awards and achievements

This has been an outstanding year for awards to, and achievements by, Foundation-supported projects and I can only mention a representative

sample here. We are naturally very proud to be associated with these projects – but let me stress that it is their dedication and hard work that has led to such successes.

In South Africa, President Mandela presented the '1997 Presidential Education Award' in the category 'Early Childhood Development' to the Learning for All Trust. The Trust followed this up by having one of its Executive Directors receive both the Provincial and National Awards for 'Outstanding Adult Educator' during 1997 Adult Learners' Week.

The Africa Peace Prize is awarded annually by ACCORD, an educational trust that trains and educates people in new and innovative forms of resolving conflict. The 1997 prize was awarded to the country of Mozambique for its success in building a peaceful society following the end of hostilities. It was collectively received by a 100-strong delegation that included representatives of institutions and organisations whose work had contributed to this success. Among these were two representatives from the Associação da Criança, Familia e Desenvolvimento, one of whom was a member of a remote rural community who has played a leading role in the work of the Associação.

In Jamaica, *Start* – the newsletter of the Basic Schools Revitalisation project – received one of only three Awards of Excellence given by the Public Relations Society of Jamaica. The judges commended its general excellence, finding it 'attractively designed with good educational content'. In tandem, a public relations programme for the project received an Award of Merit, being 'comprehensively planned and executed, with a workplan that was commendable, particularly given the tight budget'. Both of these productions were in association with Cara Ltd, a Jamaican public relations company.

In Israel, the Israel Association of Community Centres honoured three Arab Community Centre Directors who are involved with the Foundation-supported Child in Focus project, for their outstanding efforts. The Child in Focus project covers eight Arab communities in the north of Israel.

In Australia, the Northern Territory authorities accredited the early childhood curriculum developed by the Foundation-supported Arrernte project for Aboriginal children. The curriculum is in the Arrernte language, and was developed through a programme that included rediscovering and revalidating Arrernte early childhood practices. Its accreditation followed extensive field-testing, and is expected to open the way for other Aboriginal-language groups to assume control over the education of their children.

Finally in this section, I would like to mention an award from South Africa to the Foundation

that was made by the Western Cape Foundation for Community Development on the occasion of the 21st anniversary of the latter's establishment. The award recognises the Bernard van Leer Foundation's contribution and commitment to early childhood development. At a reception hosted by the Mayor of Cape Town, it was received on behalf of the Foundation by the Deputy Consul of the Netherlands, Mr I P Sanders.

The Oscar van Leer Award

In 1994, in honour of the 80th birthday of Oscar van Leer, the son of the Founder of the Foundation, we instituted the 'Oscar van Leer Award' – our own Oscar. This recognises excellence in Foundation-supported projects, especially in enabling parents and communities to help young children realise their innate potential. It carries with it a prize of NLG 25,000 for use by the winning project in its work.

At a ceremony at the Foundation in October 1997, the fourth Oscar van Leer Award was presented to John Conradie of the Kushanda Pre-school Programme in Zimbabwe by Ivar Samrén, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation. Mr Samrén stressed the outstanding work of the project in motivating and in securing the support of parents and local communities to improve the conditions and environments of children in rural areas of Zimbabwe. In Harare, at the same time, the Netherlands Ambassador to Zimbabwe hosted a reception to celebrate the project's work. This was attended by many project team members and by representatives of the Government of Zimbabwe, donor organisations, NGOs, the corporate world and the international community.

Retirement of Trustees

Following a total of 26 years of service to the Foundation, Trustees Wim Brouwer of the Netherlands and Wilson Cross of the United States of America retired from the Board of Trustees on reaching the statutory retirement age. I would like to take this public opportunity to thank them for the outstanding contributions that each of them made, both in the normal operations of the Foundation, and in helping to guide us through a time of substantial change.

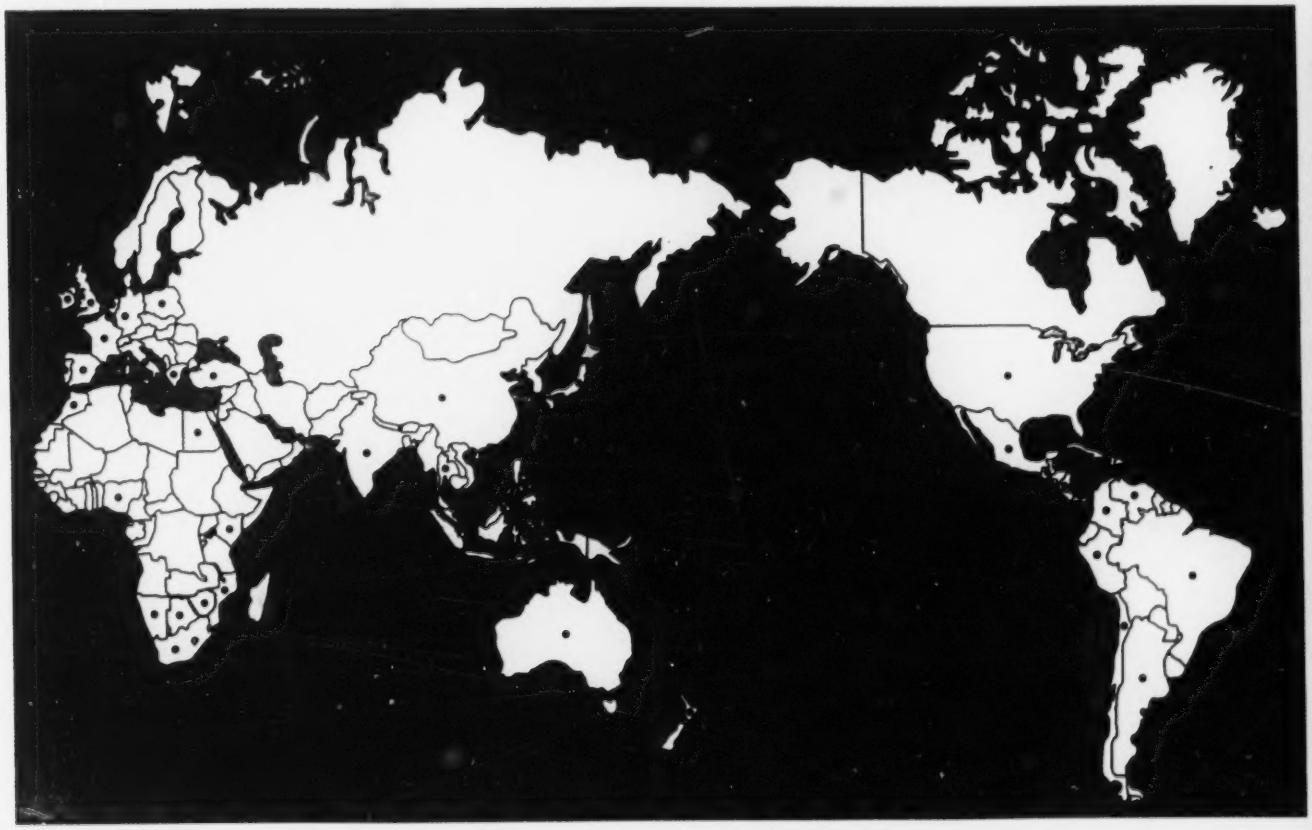
Conclusions

1997 was a year of consolidation and of steady but considerable progress. However, there is never a time for complacency or for standing still: we constantly have to look at how we are performing. This includes being alert to changing realities in the outside world; and being able to respond appropriately, sometimes proactively, sometimes reactively.

It also calls for us to continually reflect on and refine our understanding of what we want to achieve, why, and how. In that respect, I am looking forward to seeing the results of the Foundation's newly refined approaches to its project support programme and to its monitoring. I am also looking forward to considering the first outcomes of the investigations that we have launched into 'Effectiveness' and the themes that are associated with this; and to seeing further benefits from the extensive preparatory work that we undertook during the year on gathering, analysing and sharing.

Rien van Gendt
Executive Director

Countries in which the Foundation made earmarkings 1995-1997



Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, China (People's Republic), Colombia, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Netherlands, Netherlands Antilles, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, Venezuela, Zimbabwe.

Financial Report 1997

The total income of the Bernard van Leer Foundation in 1997 amounted to NLG 32.6 million, as shown in Table 7. As in previous years, the largest single element in the income of the Bernard van Leer Foundation – NLG 27.4 million – comes from the Van Leer Group Foundation (VLGF). In comparison to 1996, the overall situation with respect to income and other available funds shows stability and consolidation.

The expenditure of the Foundation for 1997 is shown in Table 8. There is a slight increase of NLG 1.9 million in comparison to 1996. Of this, NLG 1.6 million is accounted for by an increase in earmarking to projects, and in expenditure related to Programme Development and Management, and Programme Documentation and Communication.

Financial Information

The financial information about the operations of the Foundation that follows is presented in a series of tables and charts with explanatory notes.

Table 1 [illegible] regarding charitable spending

	1995	1996	1997
Earmarkings*	20.9	24.1	24.0
Commitments paid out	24.7	24.1	23.7
Outstanding commitments	46.1	47.2	46.7

Amounts NLG x 1,000,000
** Including contributions of co-funders*

Earmarkings are amounts of money that are set aside by the Foundation when projects are approved for funding. Normally an earmarking by the Foundation results in a contract with a grantholder, an organisation that is responsible for the implementation of the approved project. Once the Foundation and the grantholder sign this contract, the earmarking becomes a commitment.

Commitments are directly linked to the terms of the contract. As each project normally has a duration of several years, payments are made in periodic instalments.

Funds earmarked for a project are reserved immediately. This means that future payments to grantholders are never contingent on the future income of the Foundation.

Outstanding commitments are commitments not yet paid to grantholders at the end of the year. They include earmarkings made in 1997 and some from previous years.

Table 2 Earmarkings by country 1995-1997

	1995	1996	1997	1995-1997	% of total
Argentina		0.087		0.087	0.1
Australia	1.169	0.014	0.144	1.327	2.0
Belgium		0.133	0.023	0.156	0.2
Botswana	0.026	0.023		0.049	0.1
Brazil	0.194	1.292	0.573	2.059	3.2
Chile	0.730	0.252	0.207	1.189	1.8
China (People's Republic)		0.050		0.050	0.1
Colombia	1.577	0.095	0.907	2.579	4.0
Egypt	0.043	0.431	0.018	0.493	0.8
El Salvador	0.082	1.125	0.046	1.252	1.9
France	0.005	0.456	0.020	0.481	0.7
Germany	0.497	0.040	1.405	1.941	3.0
Greece	0.033	0.019	0.602	0.654	1.0
Guatemala		0.724	0.713	1.436	2.2
India	0.121	0.291	0.769	1.180	1.8
Ireland		0.003	0.032	0.034	0.1
Israel	1.240	2.142	3.788	7.171	11.0
Italy		0.610	0.006	0.616	0.9
Jamaica	1.046	0.511	0.699	2.256	3.5
Japan	0.286			0.286	0.4
Kenya	0.706	1.868	0.124	2.698	4.2
Malaysia	0.565	0.243	1.423	2.231	3.4
Mexico	1.077	0.229	1.949	3.255	5.0
Morocco	1.000			1.000	1.5
Mozambique	0.709	0.132	0.387	1.228	1.9
Namibia	0.079	0.973	0.718	1.770	2.7
The Netherlands	0.528	1.057	0.484	2.069	3.2
Netherlands Antilles	1.321	0.167	0.157	1.645	2.5
New Zealand	0.021	0.158	0.014	0.192	0.3
Nicaragua		1.250	0.030	1.280	2.0
Nigeria	0.149		0.016	0.165	0.3
Peru	0.074	0.758	0.421	1.253	1.9
Poland	0.122	0.729		0.851	1.3
Portugal	0.779	0.859	0.051	1.689	2.6
South Africa	1.348	0.983	1.517	3.848	5.9
Spain	0.577	0.543	0.816	1.935	3.0
Thailand	0.739	0.153	0.437	1.330	2.0
Trinidad and Tobago	0.225	0.023	0.924	1.172	1.8
Turkey	0.778	0.033	1.005	1.816	2.8
United Kingdom	0.640	0.226	1.217	2.083	3.2
United States of America	0.071	2.117	0.176	2.364	3.6
Venezuela	0.064	1.018	0.490	1.572	2.4
Zimbabwe	0.204	0.420	0.884	1.509	2.3
Others	0.040	0.641	0.039	0.720	1.1
Subtotal	18.864	22.878	23.229	64.970	100.0
Operational Projects	1.160	1.181	1.530	3.871	
Total	20.024	24.059	24.759	68.841	

Amounts NLG 1,000,000

Over the last three years, the Foundation has made grants/earmarkings in 43 countries in both developing and industrialised countries. For the next four years the Foundation will limit its grantmaking to 40 countries. For details see page 34 of this Annual Report.

Earmarkings include those for country-based projects and for operational projects. These latter are projects that are implemented by the Foundation itself and include: the publications and video programme; network development; the project on culturally relevant approaches; and so on.

Table 3 Earmarkings in developing and industrialised countries

	1995	1996	1997	1995-1997	% of total
Developing countries	12.9	13.8	14.4	41.1	63.3
Industrialised countries	6.0	9.1	8.8	23.9	36.7
Total	18.9	22.9	23.2	65.0	100.0

Amounts NLG x 1,000,000

For the categorisation of countries as 'developing' or 'industrialised', the Foundation uses the United Nations' criteria. The actual distribution of resources/earmarkings over developing and industrialised countries is broadly in line with the policy intentions of the Foundation: that is to say, around 60 per cent to developing, and 40 per cent to industrialised countries.
During 1997 the Foundation made 137 earmarkings in response to approximately 1,040

Table 4 Earmarkings 1997*

NLG			Number	Amount (Millions NLG)	Amount as % of total
0	-	50,000	78	1.6	6.8
50,000	-	150,000	21	1.8	8.0
150,000	-	300,000	14	2.9	12.5
300,000	-	500,000	11	4.4	18.9
500,001	-	1,000,000	10	7.8	33.7
1,000,000	-	>	3	4.7	20.1
Total			137	23.2	100.0

**Excluding operational projects*

funding applications. The number of applications for funding has remained quite stable during the last three years.

Of the 137 earmarkings in 1997, 78 were below NLG 50,000. These small-scale, one-off grants represent only 6.8 per cent of the total amount earmarked. The remaining 59 earmarkings relate to long-term projects, the development of which is carefully monitored and actively supported. The processes and outcomes of such projects are analysed with a view to informing policy and practice. They provide the Foundation with the profile it wishes to have: not just a funder but an organisation that adds value to its funding.

The figures that follow relate only to the principal earmarkings of the Foundation, that is earmarkings of NLG 50,000 and above. There were 59 earmarkings in this category in 1997.

Table 5 Earmarkings of NLG 50,000 and above in 1997*

NLG			Number of Earmarkings	New Projects		Current Projects	
				Number	Millions NLG	Number	Millions NLG
50,000	-	150,000	21	5	0.5	16	1.3
150,000	-	300,000	14	9	1.9	5	1.0
300,000	-	500,000	11	7	2.7	4	1.7
500,000	-	1,000,000	10	3	2.2	7	5.7
1,000,000	-	>	3			3	4.7
Total			59	24	7.3	35	14.4

**Excluding operational projects*

It is important to realise that the number of earmarkings is not identical to the number of new projects. In fact, 35 earmarkings were made for current projects in 1997, to extend a project and/or for supplementary funding.

The actual duration of funding for individual projects varies from a few months to five years. The average duration of funding for projects that were operational in 1997 was 24 months.

Monitoring of projects by the Foundation goes beyond the monitoring of those parts that are funded by the Foundation itself. Frequently the Foundation will be able to

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Table 6 The Bernard van Leer Foundation funding and counterpart funding

	1995	1996	1997	1995-1997	% of total
BvLF funding*	20.0	24.1	24.8	68.9	49.9
Counterpart funding	24.5	17.4	27.3	69.2	50.1
Total	44.5	41.5	52.1	138.1	100.0

Amounts NLG x 1,000,000
**Including contributions of co-funders*

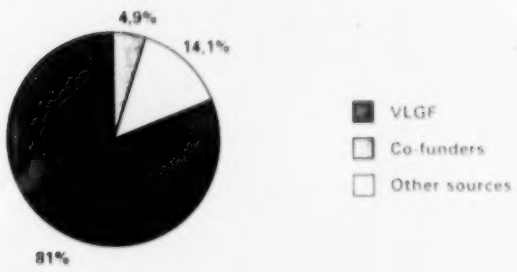
attract funds for the projects it supports from other donors. This is referred to as co-funding, which means that such external contributions are channelled through the Foundation to the projects. Contributions from co-funders are shown in Table 6 under 'BvLF funding'. In 1997 co-funding amounted to approximately NLG 1.5 million.

Besides co-funding, there is counterpart funding. Counterpart funding means that the grantholder, on its own initiative or with support from the Foundation, is able to attract direct additional funding for the project. The combination of earmarking by the Foundation, co-funding and counterpart funding, adds up to the value of the programme that is monitored by the Foundation. For the period 1995-1997 this amounted to NLG 138.1 million.
Besides the use of income for earmarking to country-based projects and operational projects (together referred to as 'earmarking to projects'), the income of the

Table 7 Income and other available funds

	1995	1996	1997	1995-1997	% of total
VLGF*	21.0	27.0	27.4	75.4	81.0
Co-funders	1.1	2.0	1.5	4.6	4.9
Other sources	4.8	4.6	3.7	13.1	14.1
Total	26.9	33.6	32.6	93.1	100.0

Amounts NLG x 1,000,000
** Van Leer Group Foundation*



Foundation is used for the three other categories of expenditure shown in Table 8.

Comparing Table 8 and Table 7, differences can be seen between the expenditures and income of the Foundation. Such differences can be explained by drawings on, or

Table 8 Expenditure

	1995	1996	1997	1995-1997	% of total
Earmarking to projects	20.0	24.1	24.8	68.9	73.1
Programme Development and Management	4.4	4.4	5.1	13.9	14.7
Programme Documentation and Communication	1.7	1.8	2.0	5.5	5.8
Central Costs	1.9	1.9	2.2	6.0	6.4
Total	28.0	32.2	34.1	94.3	100.0

Amounts NLG x 1,000,000

additions to, a reserve fund that the Foundation has on its balance sheet. For instance in 1997, with an income of NLG 32.6 million and expenditures of NLG 34.1 million, an amount of NLG 1.5 million was drawn from the reserve fund. At the end of 1997, the reserve fund totalled approximately NLG 21.5 million.

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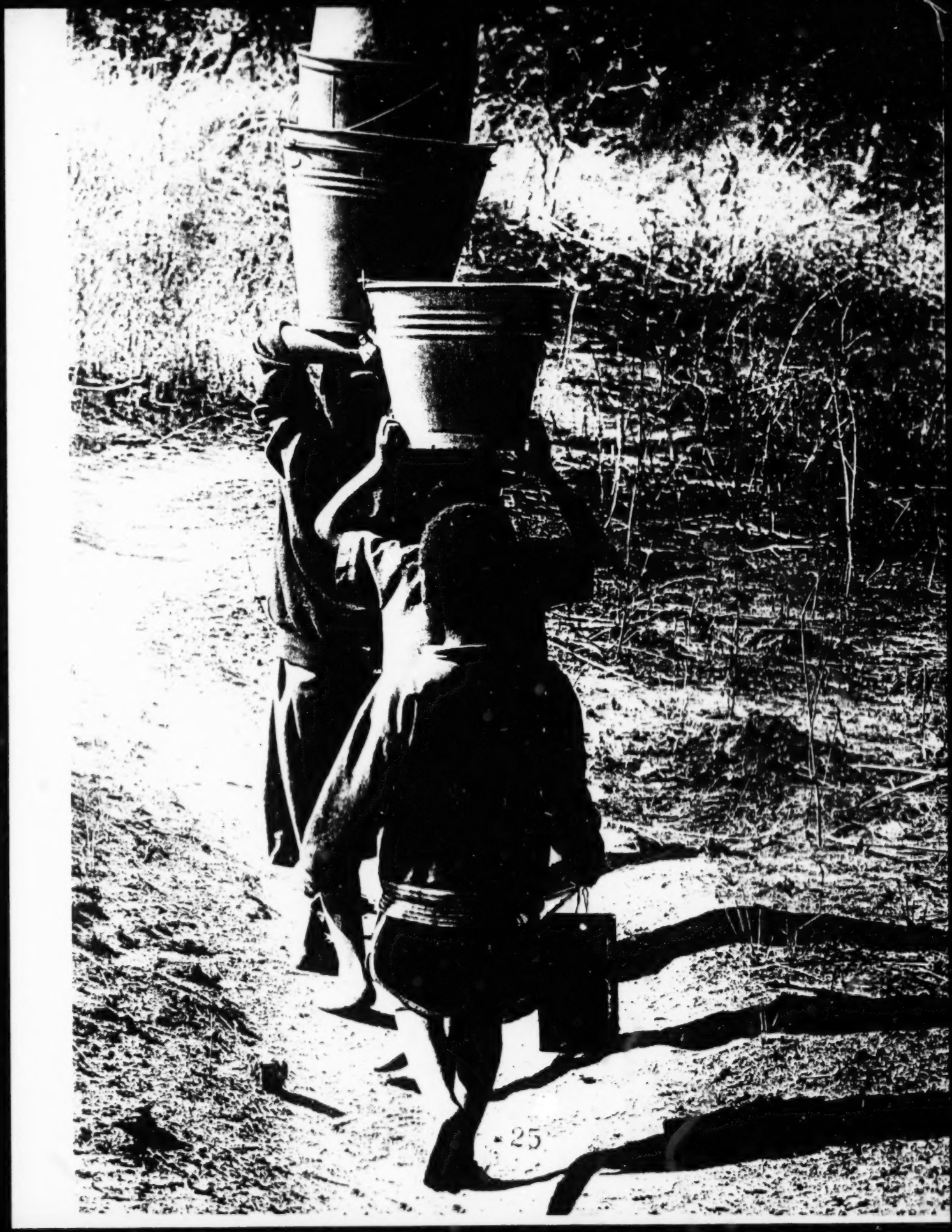


Major projects supported by the Foundation during 1997

The projects listed below are the major projects that received support from the Bernard van Leer Foundation during 1997. A 'major' project is normally defined as having a duration of more than one year. Projects are listed alphabetically by country, and then by region, as follows:

name of project with acronym and name of co-funder, where applicable; and
name of partner organisation(s) with acronym where applicable.

Argentina

Yachay Programme
Obra Claretiana para el Desarrollo (OCLADE)

Australia

Aboriginal Early Childhood Forum
University of Wollongong

Aboriginal Teacher Training
Batchelor College

Arrernte Early Childhood Project
Yipirinya School Council Inc

Hunter Caravan National Dissemination Programme
Family Action Centre, University of Newcastle

Belgium

Milestones through Equality Towards Quality (MEQ)
Vormingscentrum voor de Begeleiding van het Jonge Kind (VBJK)

Botswana

Children of the Earth
Kuru Development Trust

Brazil

Black Children
Fundação da Criança e do Adolescente (FUNAC/MA)

Child Life Span (in association with the Liberty Foundation, the Netherlands)
Serviço Social da Indústria (SESI)

Natal Backyard Nurseries
Fé e Alegria Nacional

Rural Toddlers
Secretaria de Saúde do Estado de Ceará

Chile

Child Resilience
MAK Consultora SA

Early Childhood Care and Education Practice in Latin America
Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Educación (CIDE)

Rural Mobile Service (in association with the Commission of the European Union)
Fundación para el Desarrollo Integral del Menor y la Familia (INTEGRA)

Upgrading Service Quality and Coverage
Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles (JUNJI)

China (People's Republic)

Field Study on ECD Perceptions
China National Institute for Educational Research

Colombia

Infancia y Calidad de Vida
Universidad del Norte

Niños del Caribe
Universidad del Norte

Rural Children
Fundación para el Desarrollo Integral del Menor y la Familia

Televisión y Violencia
Asociación de Televidentes de Cali

Egypt

Children of the Nile
North South Consultants Exchange

El Salvador

Escuela de Padres
Universidad Centro-Americana José Simeón Cañas

Niños de Vendedores Ambulantes
Fe y Alegría

France

Observatoire National
Association Relais Enfants-Parents (REP)

Parent-run Pre-school Centres
Association des Collectifs Enfants-Parents Professionnels (ACEPP)

Germany

Interkulturelle Elternarbeit
Arbeitskreis Neue Erziehung

Kind Im Mittelpunkt (KIM)
Verein zur Förderung Ausländischer und Deutscher Kinder (VAK)

Greece

Synergy
Société pour l'Epanouissement et les Activites Créatives des Enfants (SEDCE)

Guatemala

Los Niños
Fundación Esfuerzo y Prosperidad (FUNDAESPRO)

Niños Indígenas Desplazados
Enfants Réfugiés du Monde (ERM)

India

Bringing up Tribal Children
Utkal University

Children in Charge
Centre for Health, Education, Training and Nutrition Awareness (CHETNA)

Children's Gardens
Deccan Development Society

Children on the Agenda
M S Swaminathan Research Foundation

Educational Oases
Bodh Shiksha Samiti (BODH)

Fountain of Youth
Thakur Hari Prasad Institute

Taking Care of Our Children
Mahila Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) Trust

Tamil Child to Child
Gandhigram Rural Institute

Ireland

Child Development Project
Southern Health Board

Parent Support Programme – Midlands
Midland Health Board

Parent Support Programme – Mid West
Mid Western Health Board

Parent Support Programme – North East
North Eastern Health Board

Israel

Al Tifle Fil Wasat
Israel Association of Community Centres (MATNAS)

Bedouin Capacity Building
Negev Education Association

Bedouin Health Project (in association with the Collectieve Israel Actie; and the Schumacher-Kramer Foundation, the Netherlands)
Galilee Society for Health Research and Services (GSHRS)

Beer Sheva National Dissemination Programme (in association with the EDLI Foundation; and the Levi Lassen Foundation, the Netherlands)
Association for the Advancement of the Ethiopian Family and Child in Israel

East Jerusalem Dissemination (in association with the Commission of the European Union)
Trust of Programmes for Early Childhood, Family and Community Education Ltd

Equal Access in Arab Early Childhood Education
New Israel Fund/SHATIL

In-Service Teacher Training
Acre Women's Association

Kiryat Gat Project (in association with the EDLI Foundation, the Netherlands)
Jewish Agency for Israel

Moses and Solomon National Dissemination Programme (in association with the EDLI Foundation; and the Levi Lassen Foundation, the Netherlands)
Association for the Advancement of the Ethiopian Family and Child in Israel

Italy

Migrant Families and Local Communities
Istituto per la Promozione dello Sviluppo Economico e Sociale (ISPES)

Resource Families
Istituto per la Promozione dello Sviluppo Economico e Sociale (ISPES)

With Children in the Community
Centro di Solidarietà Sociale – Il Ponte

Jamaica

ECE Revitalisation in Jamaica (in association with the Commission of the European Union)
Dudley Grant Memorial Trust Fund

Roving Caregivers (in association with WeeTwee, the Netherlands)
Dudley Grant Memorial Trust Fund

South Side Parent Association
Grace and Staff Community Development Foundation

Japan

Okinawa Project
Okinawa Association of Community Toy and Book Libraries

Kenya

Children of Kiwania-Kimave
Faculty of Psychology, Jomo Kenyatta University

Demystifying Children's Rights
African Network for the Prevention and Protection of Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN)

ECD Community Support (in association with the World Bank)
Aga Khan Foundation

Mwana Mwende
Mwana Mwende Child Development Trust

Regional Training and Resource Centre (RTRC)
Kenya Institute of Education

Samburu Community-based ECD Programme
Kenya Institute of Education/Christian Children's Fund

Malaysia

Beginning with Younglings
Persatuan Dayak Bakong-Timur

Childhood Friends
Persatuan Sahabat Wanita Selangor (PSWS)

Childhood Restoration
Baram Self Development Association (BASDA) Sarawak

Children: Our Future
People's Service Organisation (PSO)

Growing Up
Indigenous Peoples Development Centre (IPDC)

Growing Up Stronger
Pre-school Teachers' Association (PSTA), Northern Zone

Lessons from the Countryside
Partners of Community Organisations (PACOS)

Mexico

Escuela de la Vida
Centro de Educación Infantil (CEI)

Estancias Infantiles Populares
Enlace de Comunicación y Capacitación, and Centro de Encuentros y Diálogos (CED)

Niños Callejeros
Centro de Apoyo al Niño de la Calle (CANICA)

Niños Refugiados
Comisión Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados

Nuestros Derechos
Investigación y Educación Autogestiva (IEPAAC)

Nuevos Espacios Educativos
Centro de Estudios Educativos (CEE)

Proyecto Citlalmina
Unidad de Capacitación e Investigación Educativa para la Participación (UCIEP)

Morocco

ATFALE
Association ATFALE

Koranic Pre-schools Programme
Ministère de l'Education Nationale

Mozambique

Country Support Programme
Ministério da Coordenação de Acção Social; Associação dos Amigos da Ilha de Moçambique (AAIM); and Associação Criança, Familia e Desenvolvimento

ECD and Use of Local Language
Diocese de Lichinga

New Paths for Children
Associação Criança, Familia e Desenvolvimento

Namibia

Child Development Programme
Council of Churches in Namibia

Erongo Pro-Child Initiative
Rossing Foundation

Family Support in ECD
UNICEF Country Office Namibia

Omaheke Community Health Project
Health Unlimited

Partnership for Children
UNICEF Country Office Namibia

the Netherlands

Moeders Informeren Moeders (MIM)
Nederlands Instituut voor Zorg en Welzijn (NIZW); and Kruisvereniging Breda

Samenspel (in association with the Liberty Foundation, the Netherlands)
Stichting Samenspel Op Maat

Young Children's Views
Wetenschappelijke Edukatieve en Sociaal-Kulturele Projekten (WESP)

Netherlands Antilles

Caribbean Support Initiative
Sentro di Informashon i Formashon na Bienestar di Mucha (SIEMA)

Immigrant Children
Central Agency for Joint Financing Development Programme (CEDI) *St Maarten*

SIEMA Early Childhood Care and Education (in association with the Commission of the European Union)
Sentro di Informashon i Formashon na Bienestar di Mucha (SIEMA)

New Zealand

Anau Ako Pasifika
Early Childhood Development Unit

Kaiawhina
Presbyterian Support Services (Northern)

Nicaragua

Centros Infantiles
Comité Pro Ayuda Social (COMPAS)

Ciudad Sandino
Centro de Educacion y Comunicacion Popular (CANTERA)

Niño a Niño
Centro de Informacion y Servicios de Asesoria en Salud (CISAS)

Preescolares Comunales
Ministerio de Educación

Nigeria

Stimulation/Play in Lagos Periphery
Community Child Education and Development (COMED)

Peru

Children Tapunacuy
Instituto Region y Desarrollo (IRD)

Kusisqa Wawa
Ministerio de la Mujer y Desarrollo Humano (PROMUDEH)

National Non-formal Education Programme
Ministerio de Educación

Pucllay Wasy
Centro de Promocion y Desarrollo Poblacional (CEPRODEP)

Poland

CHANCES for Children
Association CHANCE

First Step – Pre-school Teachers
Polish Children and Youth Foundation (PCYF)

Portugal

Escolas Isoladas
Instituto das Comunidades Educativas (ICE)

Mobile ECD
Instituto das Comunidades Educativas (ICE)

Rede de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento Integrado do Algarve (RADIAL)
In Loco

South Africa

Big Buddy
Department of Psychology, University of the Witwatersrand

Broadening Support Bases for ECD
Ikemeleng Educare Trust

Children on the Outskirts
Early Learning Resource Unit (ELRU)

Family in Focus
Western Cape Foundation for Community Work (FCW)

Kwandebele
Learning for All Trust

Partnership in Learning
Kopanang Consortium Project

Rehlahlilwe Support Programme
Learning for All Trust

Rethinking Educare
Association for Training and Resources in Early Education (TREE)

Umlazi Child Minding
Umlazi and District Child and Family Welfare Society

Spain

Capitulaciones 92
Ayuntamiento de Santa Fe

Convivencia Intercultural
Ayuntamiento de Parla

Preescolar na Casa (PNC)
Caritas Lugo

Proyecto Avanzada
Ayuntamiento de la Villa Fuenlabrada

Thailand

A Chance for Children
Foundation for Slum Child Care

CONNECT Project
Écoles Sans Frontières (ESF)

Nursery School Programme for Displaced Burmese Children
Women's Education for Advancement and Empowerment (WEAVE)

The Bright Child 2000
MAYA: Art and Cultural Institute for Development

Trinidad and Tobago

Choices (in association with the Schumacher-Kramer Foundation, the Netherlands)
Child Welfare League

Turkey

Evaluation Mother-Child Education Programme
Mother-Child Education Foundation (MCEF)

Geçekondu Children
Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (FSWW)

Self-employment for Geçekondu Women (in association with Levi Strauss Europe, Belgium)
Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (FSWW)

United Kingdom

Cynon Valley
Save the Children Fund, UK

Early Years Forums
The National Early Years Network

Family Service Development
Family Service Units (FSU)

Fathers Plus
Children North East

Identity Project
Working Group Against Racism in Children's Resources (WGARCR)

Minority Families' Advocacy Groups
Family Rights Group

Parent Network
Parent Network

Scottish Network
Scottish Early Years and Family Network

United States of America

Maternal and Infant Health Outreach Worker (MIHOW) Dissemination Program
Center for Health Services, Vanderbilt University

Mid-South Family Alliance
Foundation for the Mid-South

National Anti-bias Education Initiative
Pacific Oaks College

Peer Education Program
Federation of Child Care Centres of Alabama (FOCAL)

Securing Young Children's Futures
Village for Families and Children; and South East Community Development Organisation (SECO)

Washington Beech Community Pre-school Project Dissemination Programme
Committee for Boston Public Housing Inc (CBPH)

Venezuela

Centros Comunitarios de Orientación y Atencion Infantil
Fundación Las Isletas

Centros de Capacitación
Centros Comunitarios de Aprendizaje (CECODAP)

Derechos en el Preescolar
Centros Comunitarios de Aprendizaje (CECODAP)

Programa de Atencion Comunitaria a la Infancia (PACOMIN)
Fundación para la Atención a la Infancia y la Familia (FUNDAPRIN)

Zimbabwe

Kushanda Community Schools
Federation of Kushanda Pre-schools

Documenting Traditional Stories
Africa Community Publishing and Development Trust

Kamativi ECD
Harare City Council

Kuumba Netarisiro
Foundation for Education with Production (FEP)/Federation of Kushanda Pre-schools

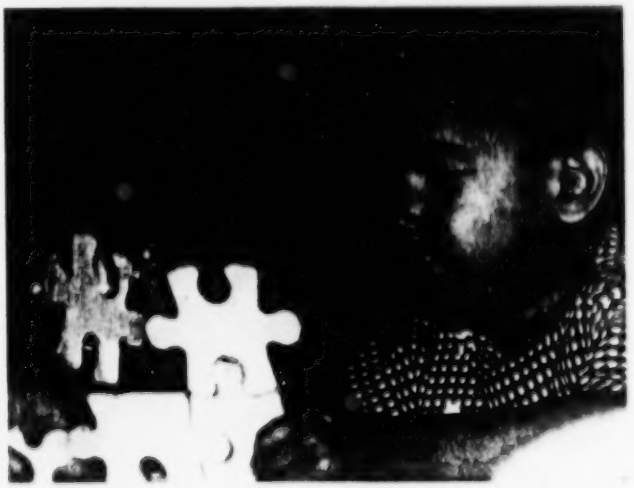
Regional projects

Middle East/North Africa

ECD in the Arab Region
Arab Resource Collective Ltd Cyprus

Sesame Street: 'Kids for Peace': Israel/West Bank/Gaza (in association with the Directorate-General of International Co-operation of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Children's Television Workshop USA

More information about the projects that the Foundation supports is available from the addresses shown on the back page.



About the Bernard van Leer Foundation

The Bernard van Leer Foundation is a private foundation based in the Netherlands. It operates internationally, concentrating its resources on early childhood development. The Foundation's income is derived from the bequest of Bernard van Leer, a Dutch industrialist and philanthropist, who lived from 1883-1958.

The Founder

The Foundation takes its name from Bernard van Leer, who in 1919, founded an industrial and consumer packaging company that was to become Royal Packaging Industries Van Leer NV. This is currently a limited company operating in over 40 countries world-wide. During his lifetime Bernard van Leer supported a broad range of humanitarian causes. In 1949, he created the Bernard van Leer Foundation, to channel the revenues from his fortune to charitable purposes after his death. When he died in 1958, the Foundation became the beneficiary of the entire share capital of the then privately owned Van Leer enterprise and other assets. Under the leadership of his son Oscar van Leer, who died in 1996, the Foundation's charitable activities were focused on supporting the optimum development of children who are disadvantaged by their social, economic or educational background.

The Foundation's objective

The Foundation seeks to enhance opportunities for children growing up in circumstances of social and economic disadvantage to optimally develop their innate potential. In doing so, the Foundation has chosen to concentrate on children from zero to seven years of age. This is because scientific findings have demonstrated that interventions in the early years of childhood are most effective in yielding lasting benefits to children and society.

The Foundation accomplishes its objective through two interconnected strategies:

1. an international grants programme in selected countries aimed at developing contextually appropriate approaches to early childhood development; and

2. the sharing of knowledge and know-how in the domain of early childhood with relevant audiences worldwide, primarily drawing on the experiences generated by the projects the Foundation supports, with the aim of informing and influencing policy and practice.

The grants programme

The Foundation's grantmaking is governed by strict geographic and programmatic criteria. Grants can only be made for projects concerned with the development of disadvantaged children aged zero to seven years, and in countries eligible for grantmaking.

For the period 1996-2001 the following 40 countries have been selected:

Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China (People's Republic), Colombia, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Netherlands, Netherlands Antilles, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, Venezuela, Zimbabwe.

In accordance with the Foundation's statutes, these are primarily countries where the Royal Packaging Industries Van Leer NV operates.

Grants are made to governmental and non-governmental, non-profit organisations.

The Foundation makes two types of grants:

1. *one-time grants for one-off projects, up to a maximum value of NLG 25,000.*
   Projects have to fit within the Foundation's general terms of reference. They must also be concerned either with enhancing the quality of early childhood development programmes (for example, by developing new activities and materials or by capacity building); or with sharing knowledge and know-how relating to early childhood development. The Foundation spends only a small percentage of its resources on these grants annually and, therefore, funds only a limited number of such small-scale projects.

2. *Grants for development projects with a long duration.*
   Applications for such projects are usually initiated by the Foundation itself. Projects have to fit within the thematic priorities the Foundation has established for the country concerned, and should be of an innovative nature, culturally relevant, sustainable and likely to have a wider impact. In addition to financial support, such projects also receive professional guidance in developing, monitoring and evaluating their experience.

At any given time, the Foundation supports more than 140 major projects around the world. All these projects concentrate on young children. However, the context in which they operate varies greatly. Some are in developing countries, others in industrialised countries. They can be situated in urban slums, shanty towns or remote rural areas. They may focus on children of ethnic and cultural minorities, single or teenage parents, or refugees and migrants; and may include children who live in settings where violence prevails, or in environments which hamper their optimum development. Projects may be concerned with improving the quality of institutional services for children – such as daycare centres, pre-schools and health and other services – or with developing community-based services; or they may focus on strengthening the quality of the home environment, targeting parents and other family members/caregivers in particular.

What all projects have in common is that they seek to develop an approach that is appropriate in its specific context. This leads to a rich diversity of practice.

Sharing knowledge and know-how

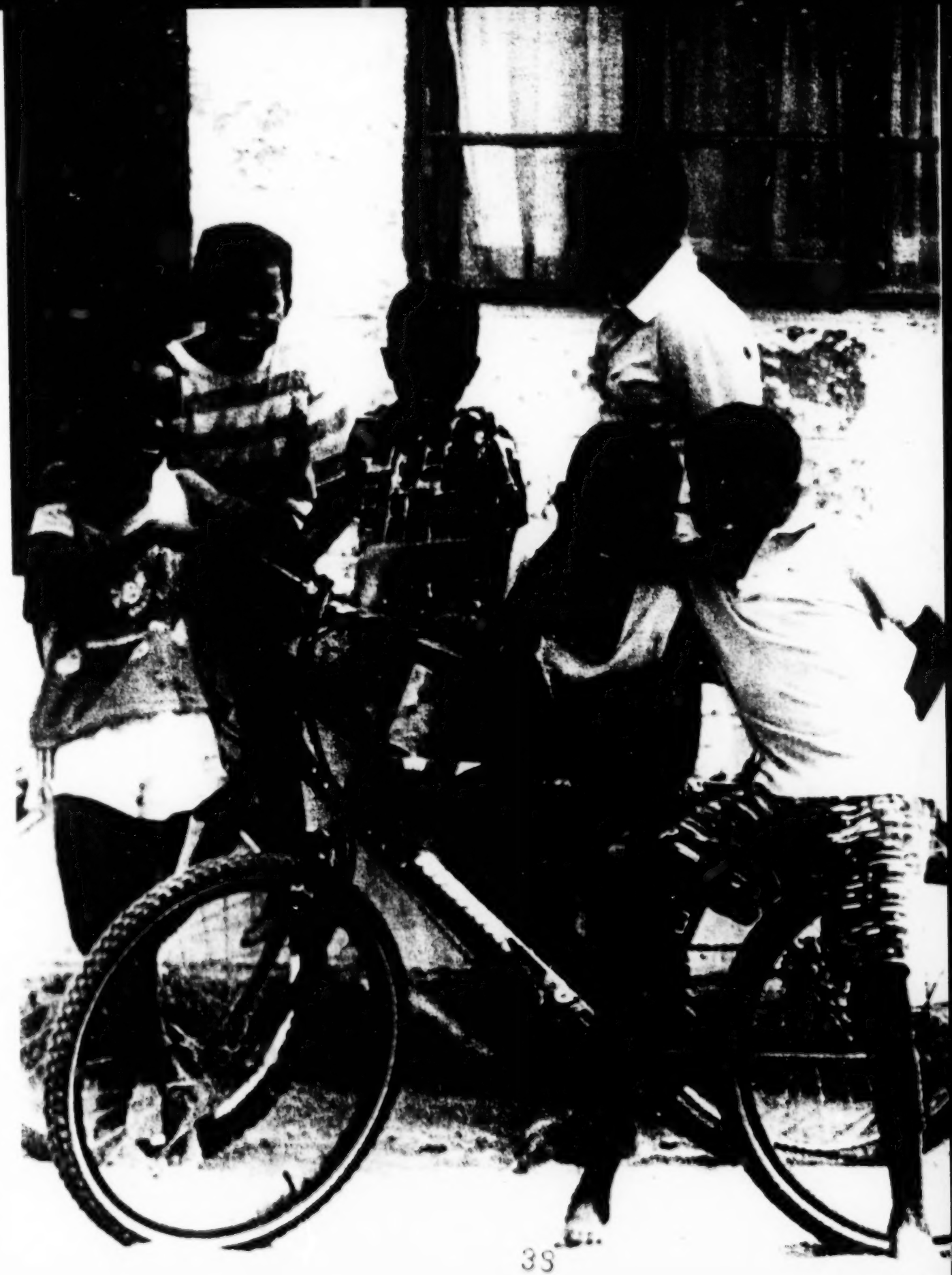
The hundreds of projects that the Foundation has supported over the years represent a wealth of experience. The Foundation capitalises on these experiences by analysing them and distilling lessons learned. The knowledge and practical know-how generated in this way is made available to those concerned with early childhood development whether as practitioners, trainers, academics or policy/decision makers. This enables the Foundation to have a wider impact than is possible through grantmaking alone.

The Foundation operates a communications programme which includes:

- regular publications (an *Annual Report*, the four monthly *Early Childhood Matters*, and an annual *Boletin Informativo*);
- a series of publications under the title 'Early Childhood Development: Practice and Reflections' that address important issues in ECD;
- a series called 'Working papers in early childhood development' that consists of background documents drawn from field experience;
- one-off publications; and
- videos illustrating the approaches that projects have developed.

The Foundation also encourages the projects that it supports to document their experience. Documents, materials, publications and videos produced by projects are housed in the Foundation's Resource Centre. In relevant cases, the Foundation also supports projects in producing their own publications and videos for wider distribution. In this way the Foundation and projects work in partnership to create better development opportunities for the greatest number of disadvantaged children possible.

The Foundation's publications are available to organisations and individuals working in the area of early childhood development and related fields anywhere in the world. They are available free of charge in single copies. A list of publications and videos can be obtained from the addresses shown on the back cover.



The Foundation's Mandate

The Foundation's Mandate is to improve opportunities for young children aged zero to seven years living in circumstances of social and economic disadvantage. It rests on a vision of a world that respects the rights, dignity and equality of children, their families and the communities they live in. This implies access to health care and education, social and economic justice, a sustainable natural environment, and opportunities for self-fulfilment.

The Foundation:

- is concerned with young children's **overall development** *and therefore promotes a holistic approach including education, health and nutrition;*
- believes that children's development is the primary responsibility of **parents** *and therefore actively promotes the enhancement of parents' capacity to support their children's development;*
- attaches great importance to the involvement of the **community** as a major factor in children's development *and therefore promotes a development strategy that is rooted in the community and is culturally, socially and economically appropriate;*
- has adopted a contextual approach which **builds on people's strengths** as a guiding principle *and therefore encourages the building of local capacity, local ownership and working in partnership.*

Concentrating on the development of young children and their environments will have a preventative and lasting effect and will generate tangible benefits.

For **children** these include: enhanced survival chances; better general health; improved social skills and school performance in later years; greater self-esteem; and a positive outlook.

For **parents and caregivers** it can lead to: enhanced capacity to support the development of children; and increased self-confidence and motivation.

For **communities** it can lead to: enhanced self-reliance; motivation to take on new tasks; and an improvement in the quality of the social fabric, thus providing a springboard for wider social change and community development.

For **society** at large it can lead to: lower repetition and drop out rates in the school system; lower delinquency rates; lower expenditure on welfare services; and a healthier and better educated population that is more able to obtain and keep productive employment and contribute fully to the development of its society.

Trustees and staff at 1 June 1998

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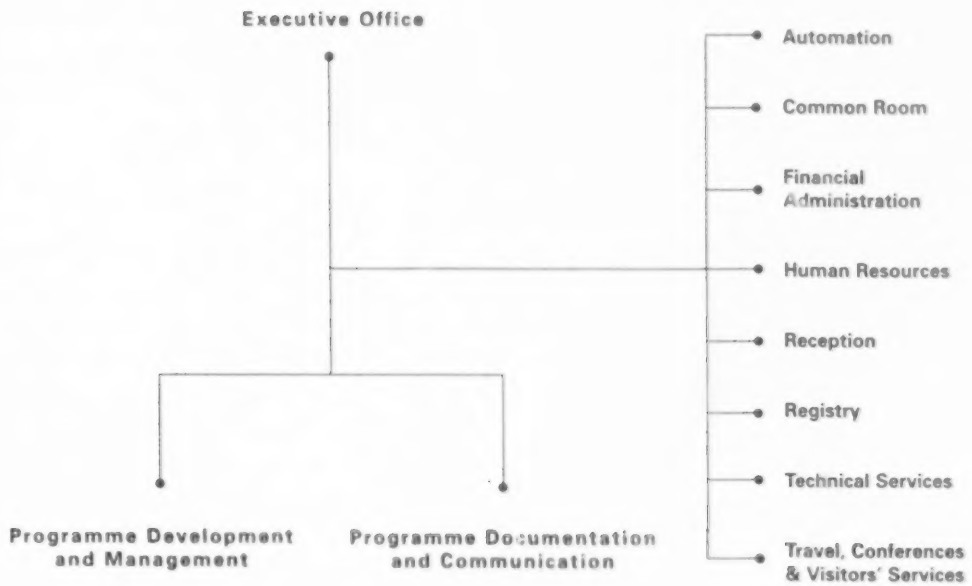

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The Bernard van Leer Foundation qualifies as an institution under Article 24, paragraph 4 of the Inheritance Tax Act of 1956.

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Netherlands; Samenspel
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South Africa; Partnership in Learning
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